



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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February 19, 2004

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley
Auditor-Controller 

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – TRINITY
CHILDREN FAMILY SERVICES- NORCO**

We have completed a review of the group home operated by Trinity Children Family Services, Norco. Norco contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation). Norco is a six-bed facility located in Riverside County, which provides care for girls ages 14-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Norco was providing services for one Los Angeles County Probation child, four San Diego County Probation children, and one Orange County Probation child.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to verify that Norco was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues and included an evaluation of the home's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and an interview with the one Los Angeles County child placed with Norco at the time of the review. The interview with the resident was designed to obtain her perspective on the program services provided by Norco and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Summary of Findings

Generally, Norco was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. However, we noted that the Agency needs to make repairs in the resident bathroom; include the resident in the development and modification of the Needs and Services Plan; enroll the resident in an emancipation program; and provide the resident with at least the required minimum weekly allowance.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management is required to provide DCFS with a written corrective action plan within 15 business days from the receipt of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact DeWitt Roberts at (626) 293-1101.

JTM:DR:CC

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
Diana Correa, Campus Administrator
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
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TRINITY CHILDREN FAMILY SERVICES

Norco

2104 Alhambra Street

Norco, CA 91760

909-734-8633

License No.: 366400274

Rate Classification Level: 12

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation

Sample size for resident interview: One

Comments:

Norco is operated by Trinity Children Family Services. The single-story blended in with other homes in the neighborhood and was nicely maintained.

The interior of the home was neat, clean, and nicely decorated. The bedrooms were spacious and personalized by the residents. However, one area needed improvement.

In bedroom number three's bathroom, the faucets in the sink and bathtub leaked and there were rust stains in the bathtub and the sink.

Norco had age-appropriate play and educational equipment including board games, computers, video tapes, books, TV, and VCR.

There was a sufficient supply of food properly stored.

Recommendations

1. Norco management:

- a. Repair the leaky faucets in the bathtub and the sink.**
- b. Remove rust stains from the bathtub and the sink.**

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

The resident met Norco's population criteria as outlined in their program statement and had complete initial diagnostic assessments.

The Needs and Services Plan (NSP) was realistic, measurable, and time specific. However, the resident's placement worker did not participate in the development and the modification of NSP. This was discussed with management who could not explain why the Agency's protocol of faxing NSPs to placement workers for review and signature, was not done.

The resident's Quarterly Report was current, comprehensive, and reflected the goals of the NSP.

The resident received individual and group therapy.

Recommendation

2. Norco management include the resident's placement worker in the development and modification of the Needs and Services Plan.

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

The resident attended school and her records contained a report card and progress report. The resident did not require an Individualized Education Plan. The resident reported that she was provided assistance with her school work and that staff was supportive of her academic progress.

Though age-appropriate, the resident was not a participant in an emancipation program. This was discussed with management who stated that the residents are cycled into emancipation sessions and the resident was not yet scheduled. The resident was employed and able to manage her money.

Recommendation

3. Norco management enroll the age-appropriate resident into an emancipation program.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

Norco followed a monthly activity schedule developed by staff. The resident stated that the residents were not included in the planning of activities. This was discussed with management who provided documentation and stated that the recreation schedule was talked about at the monthly Student Council meeting and that the residents were required to sign the meeting notes. The resident was encouraged to participate in activities that she desired and had the opportunity to watch television, play games, and read at free times during the day.

Transportation was provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

There were six residents placed in Norco at the time of the review. A review of the case files was not conducted because the Los Angeles (LA) County resident was not prescribed psychotropic medication.

Comments:

According to documentation, the LA County resident was not receiving psychotropic medication. This was confirmed by management.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interview

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

The resident was presented with the facility's policies, rules, and regulations when placed and felt that the rules were fair. The resident reported satisfaction with the home and stated that staff was "nice" and treated her with respect.

The resident reported that she felt safe in the home and that a sufficient number of staff was always in the home when residents were present. The resident rated the physical facility as "good."

Resident chores included the maintenance of their own rooms and common areas that the resident did not feel were too demanding.

The resident was able to have telephone contact with her probation officer and family and reported that there was privacy during visits and telephone calls. The resident indicated that she had religious freedom and that her health care needs were met.

The resident was aware of her right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interview

Sample size for resident interviews: One

Comments:

Norco provided appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the resident. Norco provided the resident with the required monthly clothing allowance in the amount of fifty dollars, and the resident was given the opportunity to select her own clothing. Clothing provided to the resident was of good quality and sufficient quantity.

The resident stated, and records confirmed, that she was not receiving the required minimum weekly allowance although she had the opportunity to increase her allowance based on the Agency's behavioral system. This was discussed with management who stated that they were not aware of the minimum allowance base.

Norco provided the resident with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure storage space.

The resident had a life book.

Recommendation

4. Norco management provide the resident with the required minimum allowance according to the Statement of Work.